we have ere now said, "fair competition" may resolve itself, in some cases, into "ruinous competition;" but we are probably a far way off a result so every way unprofitable to all. Were the old or solitary companies, however, compelled, by Act of Parliament, to reduce their charges to such a minimum as they *can* afford, or as fair competition would compel them to afford, then certainly we should expect not only such a reduction, but all that *additional* benefit which the monopolists admit that *one* company has it in its power to confer on a town beyond what two or more can fairly afford. It is therefore most disgraceful, we repeat, that monopolists or solitary companies which *can* do so much for the public benefit, *have* done, *are* doing, and *will* do so little, compelling wasteful competition, from which the public must ever be the either positive or negative sufferers, even while diminishing a greater evil by the institution of a less.

With the authority already quoted, and with reference to the whole series of our articles on the gas movement, we may conclude by saying, that "in our desire to have the question clearly understood, we have dwelt on local facts; but that these facts will no doubt be found of general application, and therefore may be of use in fixing the attention of all the towns in the kingdom on the present movement. Let each community investigate the subject of cost of gas, the management of the works in their localities, rates of dividend paid on stock of the company, who are the parties interested, and all particulars bearing on one and all of these points, and they will find much which it will interest them to know. *However powerful the old gas companies throughout the kingdom are, the day of reckoning has now come, and they* MUST *render an account.* Every constituency in the kingdom ought to take advantage of the present position of the gas investigation, and urge on their representatives in Parliament the necessity of seeing that the subject is thoroughly sifted and justice done, that the principle of cheap gas may be fully and finally recognised and established, and that there may once for all be an end put to one of the most abominable monopolies and means of extortion with which this country has been or is inflicted."

AGRICULTURAL USES OF GAS, LIME, &c.

A SMALL pamphlet has been published by Mr. G. W. Johnson, on the application of the gas lime, ammoniacal liquor, and tar, obtained from coal in the manufacture of gas, to agricultural purposes. These articles are by many considered as mere refuse (as is at present the case with our sewage matter), whereas they may be, and in some few cases are, applied to agricultural and other purposes, with benefit to the gas maker, the farmer, and the public. Probably, in well-regulated gas-works, not a single article need be wasted. The clinkered fire-brickwork of the benches and the burnt-out retorts might also find a market. The former might be used for building rough walls, as the clinkers from the brick-fields are occasionally used; or it would serve as an excellent foundation for roads, &c.; and the latter, if of clay, might be applied to the same purpose; or if of iron, would of course always fetch its value.

If judicious economy were the order of the day in our gas-works, the price of gas might be everywhere materially reduced, and something might be spared for the establishment, on a small scale, of baths and dressing-rooms for the workmen. B. A.

MASONRY IN THE TEMPLE CHURCH.—Sir: relative to a statement by Mr. Malcott, in your journal of May 8th, under the head of "Ironwurk in masonry," that iron cramps, &c., were not used in the bell turret of the Temple Church, I think it necessary to say, lest the above should meet the eye of any of the benchers conversant with Mr. Malcott's bills, certified by me, before reaching the architects, where iron cramps were always charged,—that this is not correct. Iron (dove-tail) cramps were used, but they were enveloped in thin sheet copper (welded), and run with lead. The joints were of the ordinary character used in all properly-constructed spires, namely, saddle joints: iron cramps were inserted in every joint, and in no one instance were they omitted.

I am, Sir, &c., JOHN KNIGHT.
Architect's office, New Terminus, Liverpool.

BUILDING NEAR DANGEROUS MANUFACTORIES.

We have received a long letter from Mr. Boulanger, contradicting statements in Mr. Sugden's letter, printed in our last, and confirming the general accuracy of our report. On the ground of "courtesy to foreigners," he claims the insertion, at all events, of part of it, and we can scarcely refuse it. We cannot promise space for any thing further on the subject.

"Mr. Sugden's assertion about having apprised the district surveyor that I had 14 years more to stay, has been sufficiently contradicted by the emphatic affirmation of that gentleman before the official referees, and the magistrate of Southwark, that, on the contrary, he had been told by Mr. Sugden that my time being expired, he would pull my premises down in a month or two, so as to form a continuous street.

The story about my having been offered £400 by parties to conduct my case, if meant to convey a slanderous intent, is disposed of by the respectability of the firm I have employed.

Mr. Sugden speaks next of his great surprise at having received, on the 12th ult., summonses to appear at the police court of Southwark on the 15th, believing that he was perfectly right in respect of his buildings! Could he have forgotten that on the 31st January, before those houses were roofed in, and four hardly begun, he appeared as defendant before the official referees? His meeting them on the ground on the 8th February, when they had the ground measured, my premises and drying stoves examined? and by adjournment to Mr. Hesketh's offices, where the case was heard, and the facts proved by sworn and competent witnesses, whom he cross-examined? and that there and then he examined in his behalf Stevens, his carpenter, who received such severe rebuke from the official referees for his indecorous way of giving his evidence? Has he forgotten his subsequent appearance before the official referees, their award in my favour, and that to Mr. Hesketh against the eighteen houses by him built, as being too glaring an infringement of the new Buildings Act?

But the real facts of the case are kept back. After the failure of Mr. Keasley, a new street being in contemplation, I was threatened to be walled in if I did not remove. I offered Mr. G. Foster to do so upon payment of a moderate compensation, which might be settled by arbitration, as I could then have found another spot where to build stores, which is not now the case. My proposition was termed an absurdity. Several applications for the ground to build upon were made; but when it was found that I should have to be ejected any how, none but Mr. Sugden was found to be bold enough to attempt it. All sorts of schemes, and traps, were laid for me to give in. In the meantime, annoyances of all kind were resorted to."

The following article relates to the same proceedings.

RECOVERY OF FEES BY DISTRICT SURVEYORS.

On Wednesday last Mr. Hesketh, the district surveyor of Bermondsey, appeared before the presiding magistrate (Mr. Cottingham), at the Southwark police office, to obtain his authority to enforce the payment of certain fees and expenses, incurred in obtaining an award of the official referees on an information laid by Mr. Hesketh against Mr. Sugden, for constructing houses in Alice-street, Bermondsey, such houses being built contrary to law.

Mr. Cottingham said, having carefully looked through the Act of Parliament, he had come to the conclusion that he had nothing to do but to call upon Mr. Sugden to pay the costs that had been incurred, as the words of the clause upon which he was called upon to act were the strongest that could possibly be used. His duty was simply ministerial, for upon proof of the award, and that the money was still unpaid, by the 107th clause of the Act, he had no discretion. If his decision was wrong, of course the parties had their redress in another quarter.

Mr. Drew, who appeared for Mr. Sugden, said the matter ought not to have been entered into at all by the official referees. Mr. Cottingham remarked, that they were shut out from this sort of defence by appearing to the after proceedings. Mr. Sugden said that he protested against the jurisdiction of the official referees. Mr. Cottingham.—Did you not stay in the room while the evidence was given? Mr. Hesketh could prove that Mr. Sugden on that occasion gave evidence in his (Mr. Hesketh's) case. Mr. Sugden required that Mr. Hesketh might be sworn to that fact. Upon being sworn, Mr. Hesketh repeated his assertion that Mr. Sugden did give evidence on that occasion. Mr. Sugden said, that he protested against the jurisdiction of the official referees, but his protest had not been received.

Mr. Cottingham repeated that he had nothing to do with the merits of the award. His duty was simply ministerial, to order the payment of the costs. If the official referees had made their award in the face of Mr. Sugden's protest, they might perhaps have done wrong, which it would be for them to answer hereafter.

Mr. Drew then took an objection, that expenses for "work done" could not be charged under the section for fees.

Mr. Cottingham.—Certainly they can. As to the award, it is perfectly good on the face of it, and if it is improperly made, it may easily be set aside. If you can prove that some collusion has taken place between the parties, the award may be set aside; but unless you do that, the award must stand. The official referees have been appointed by Parliament to take these matters into consideration, and it is very unlikely they will take them out of their hands, and place them in the hands of magistrates, who, of course, can know very little about the construction of streets and alleys. He would make out the order for the payment of the costs; but the warrant might remain unexecuted in the office for a week, to allow the defendant to offer any terms in the meantime.

CONDITION OF CLERKENWELL.

A REPORT from a committee of the Clerkenwell Paving Commissioners, appointed to view the condition of such buildings as might seem to be in a dangerous state, direct the attention of the district surveyor thereto, and to take other measures for the public safety, has just been printed. The state of some of the courts reported on is frightful. The chief result at present has been the delivering of twenty notices to owners of ruinous buildings. In concluding the report, the committee say, they "feel it incumbent upon them to draw attention to the fact, that unless some legislative measure be passed for the removal of the confined, damp, and unhealthy courts and alleys hereinbefore referred to, they will doubtless long continue to remain as pest-houses, spreading disease among the surrounding neighbourhood, as on inquiry it appears that no law at present exists which would prevent the *rebuilding* of such courts and alleys by the owners thereof, in consequence of dilapidation, &c.; and while the law prohibits the building of such places in localities where they do not *already* exist, it appears to be inoperative as regards the places built before the passing of the Metropolitan Buildings Act, however unhealthy the locality may be, arising from its confined situation, and total abstinence of all means of ventilation and drainage.

MONUMENT TO CAXTON.—Press of matter led us last week to postpone the insertion of a proposal to erect a monument in Westminster to Caxton, submitted to Lord Morpeth by the Rev. H. H. Milman, and by this time it has probably reached the majority of our readers through other channels. It is certain that the printing-press in England commenced its operations within the precincts or sanctuary of the abbey. The reverend gentleman suggests for this monument, that "the open space, at the end of the new Victoria-street, in front of the abbey, would be admirably suited. The character of the monument might be this. A fountain (of living water) by day, out of which should arise a tall pillar, obelisk, or cluster of Gothic pinnacles, for light by night; the diffusion of light being the fit and intelligible symbol for the invention of printing." A large sum might speedily be raised for this purpose, there can be no doubt.

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